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(54) **REMOTE RADIO HEADS HAVING WIRELESS JUMPER CONNECTIONS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT, SYSTEMS AND METHODS**

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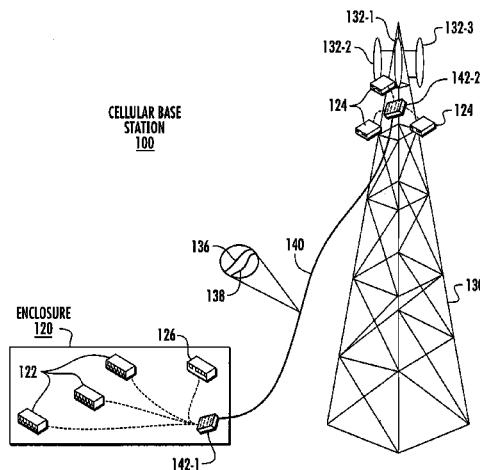
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

Methods of operating a cellular radio are provided in which a first power supply signal is transmitted from a power supply to a wireless power unit at least in part over a power cable. A second power supply signal is wirelessly transmitted from the wireless power unit to the cellular radio to power the cellular radio. Data is transmitted from a baseband unit that is associated with the cellular radio to a wireless transceiver at least in part over a data cable. This data is wirelessly transmitted from the wireless transceiver to the cellular radio. The data is then transmitted through an antenna that is coupled to the cellular radio.

17 Claims, 9 Drawing Sheets



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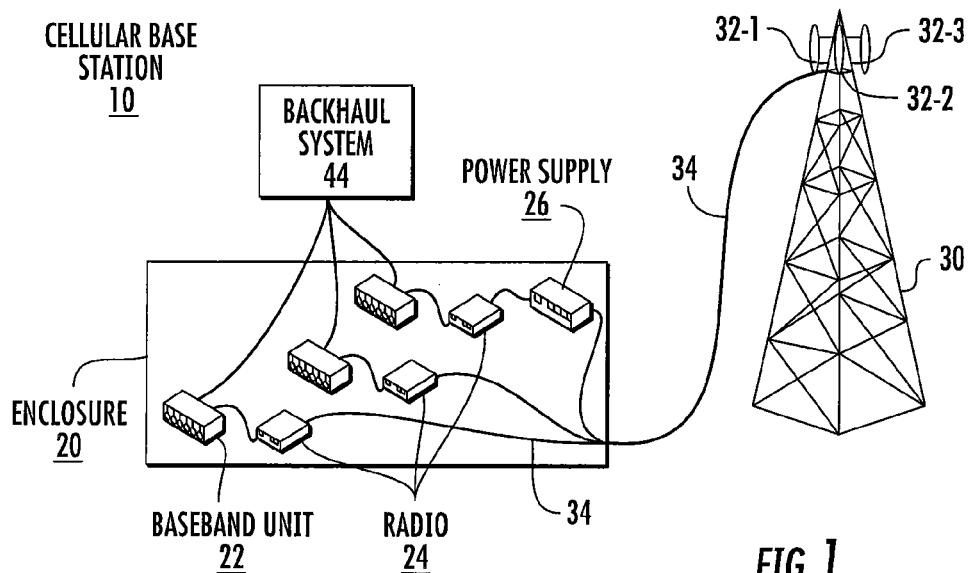


FIG. 1
(PRIOR ART)

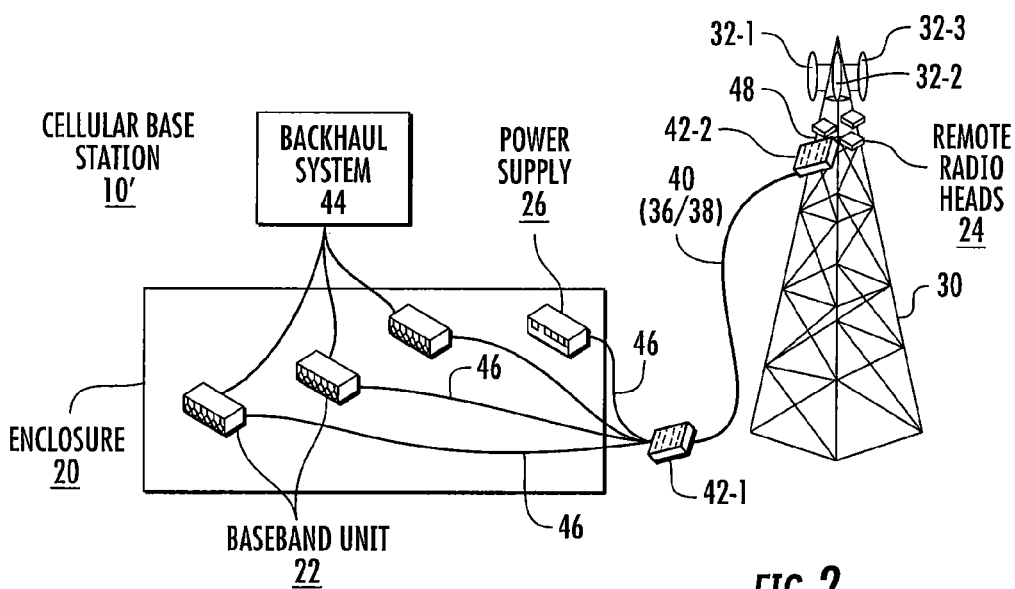


FIG. 2
(PRIOR ART)

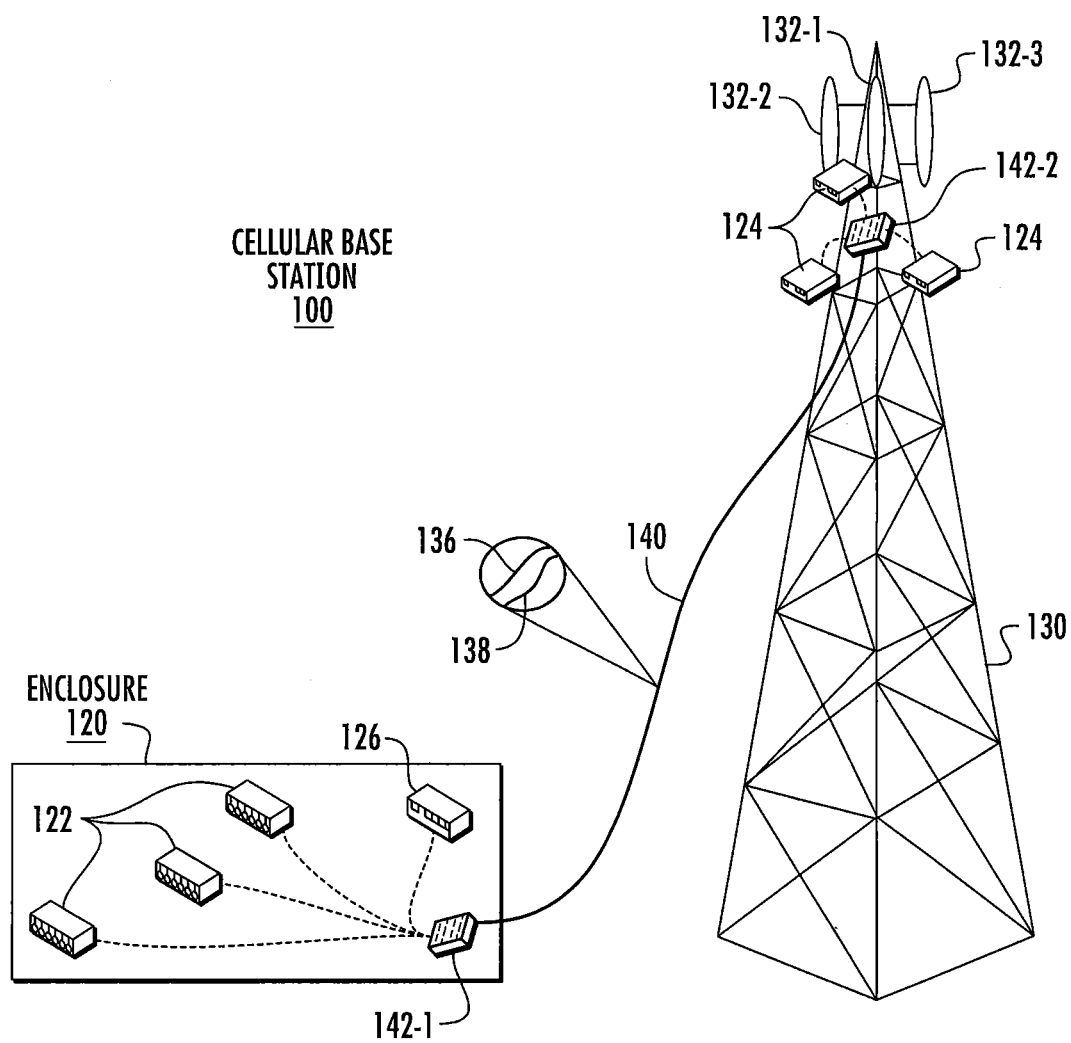
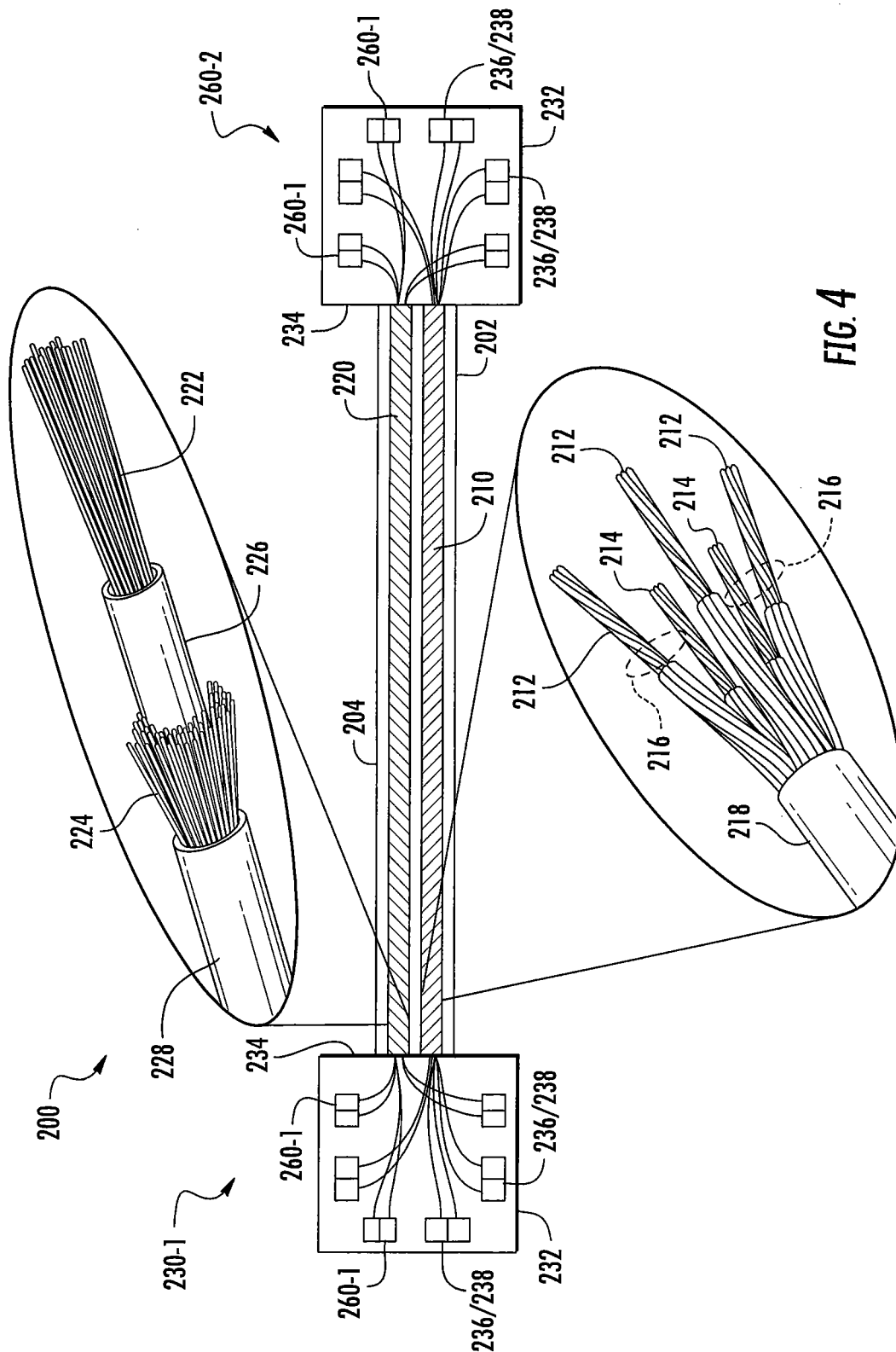


FIG. 3



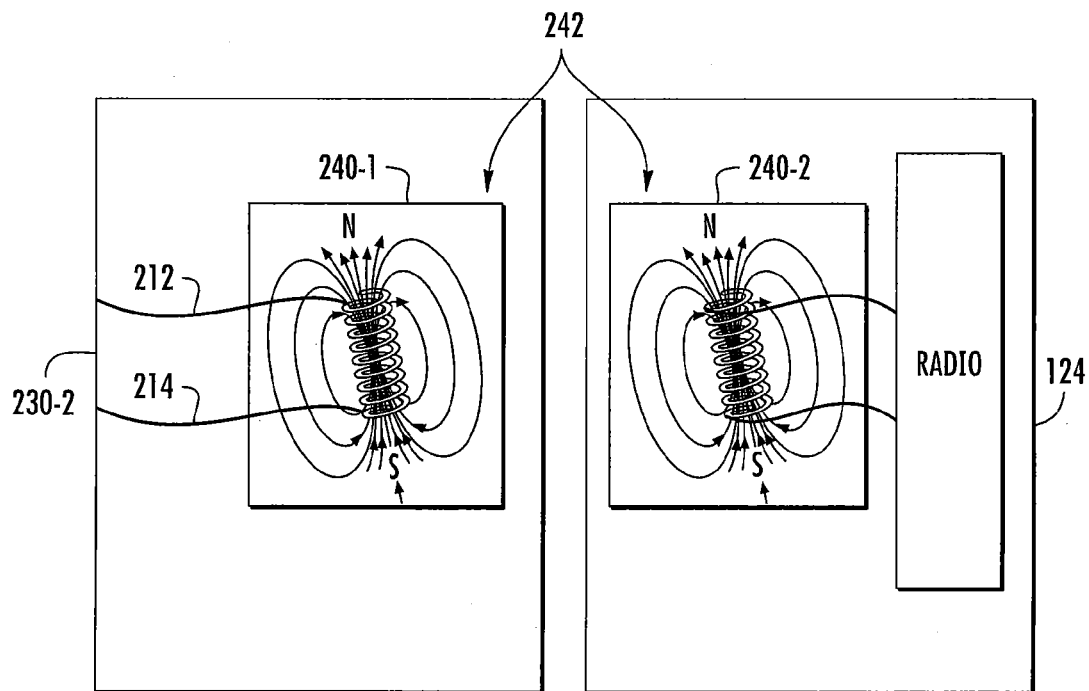


FIG. 5A

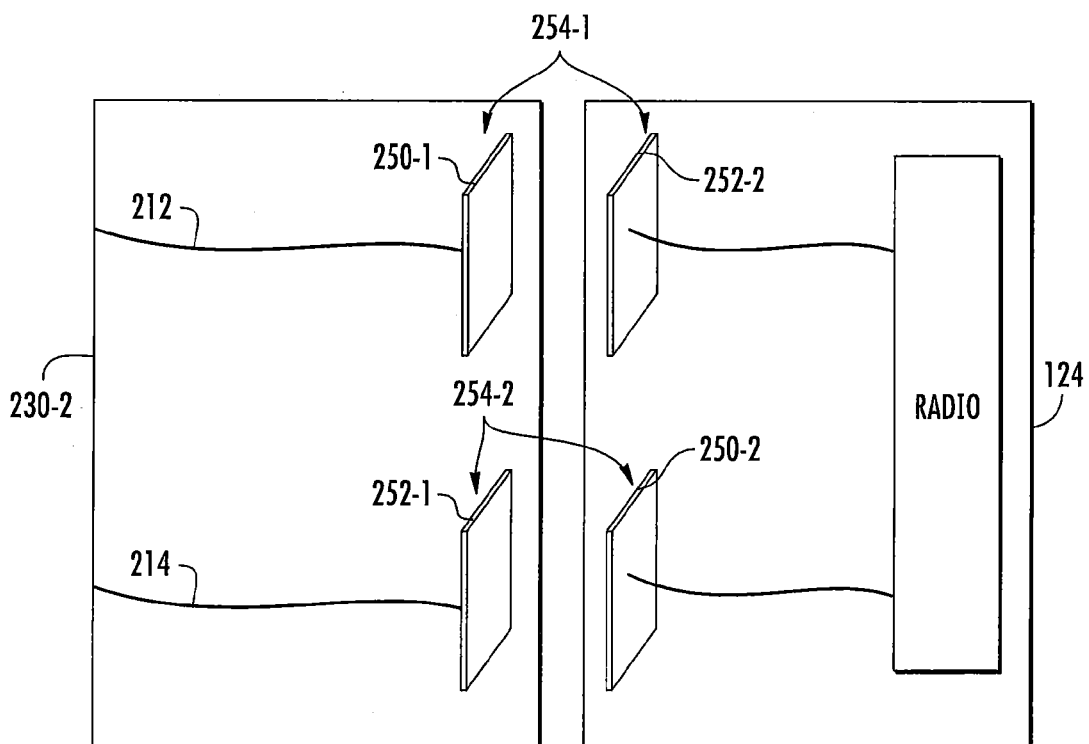


FIG. 5B

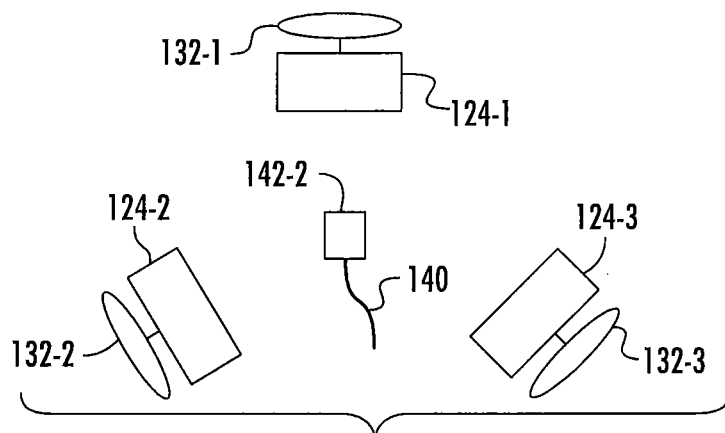


FIG. 6A

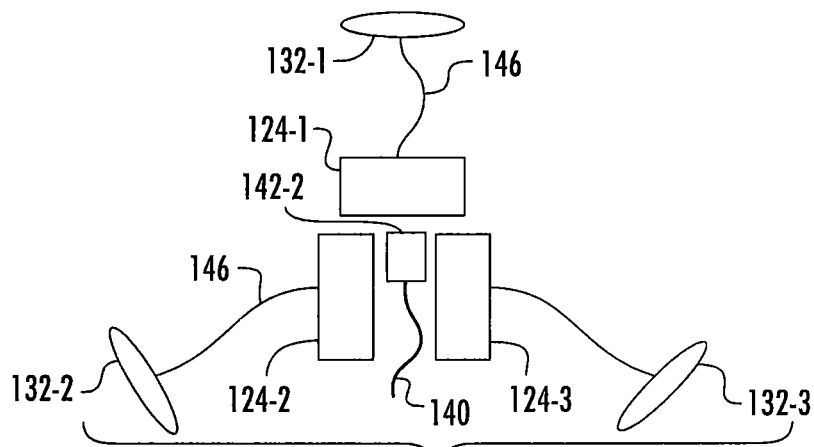


FIG. 6B

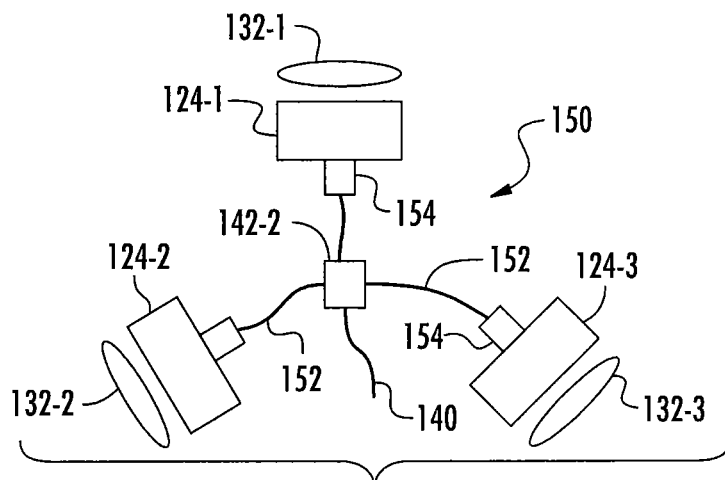


FIG. 6C

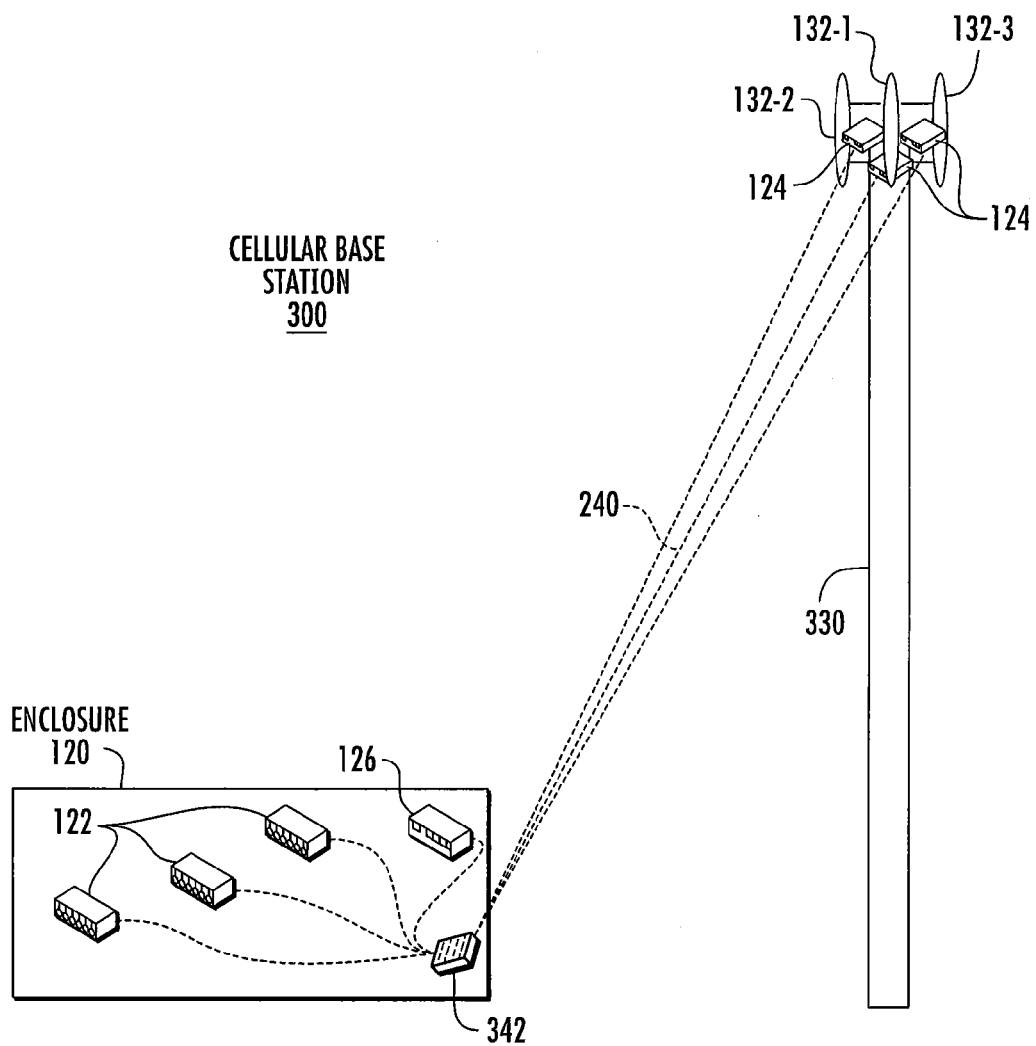


FIG. 7

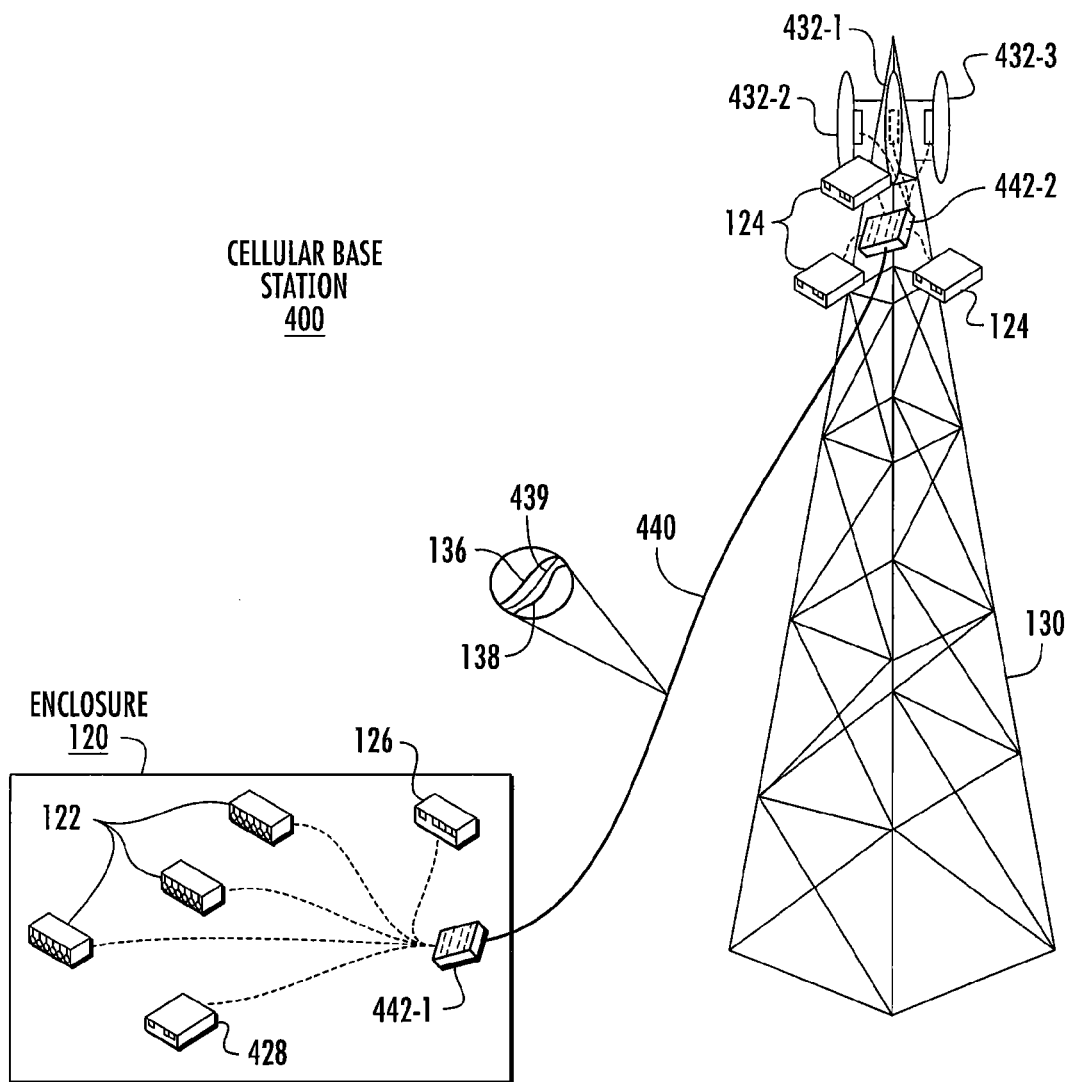


FIG. 8A

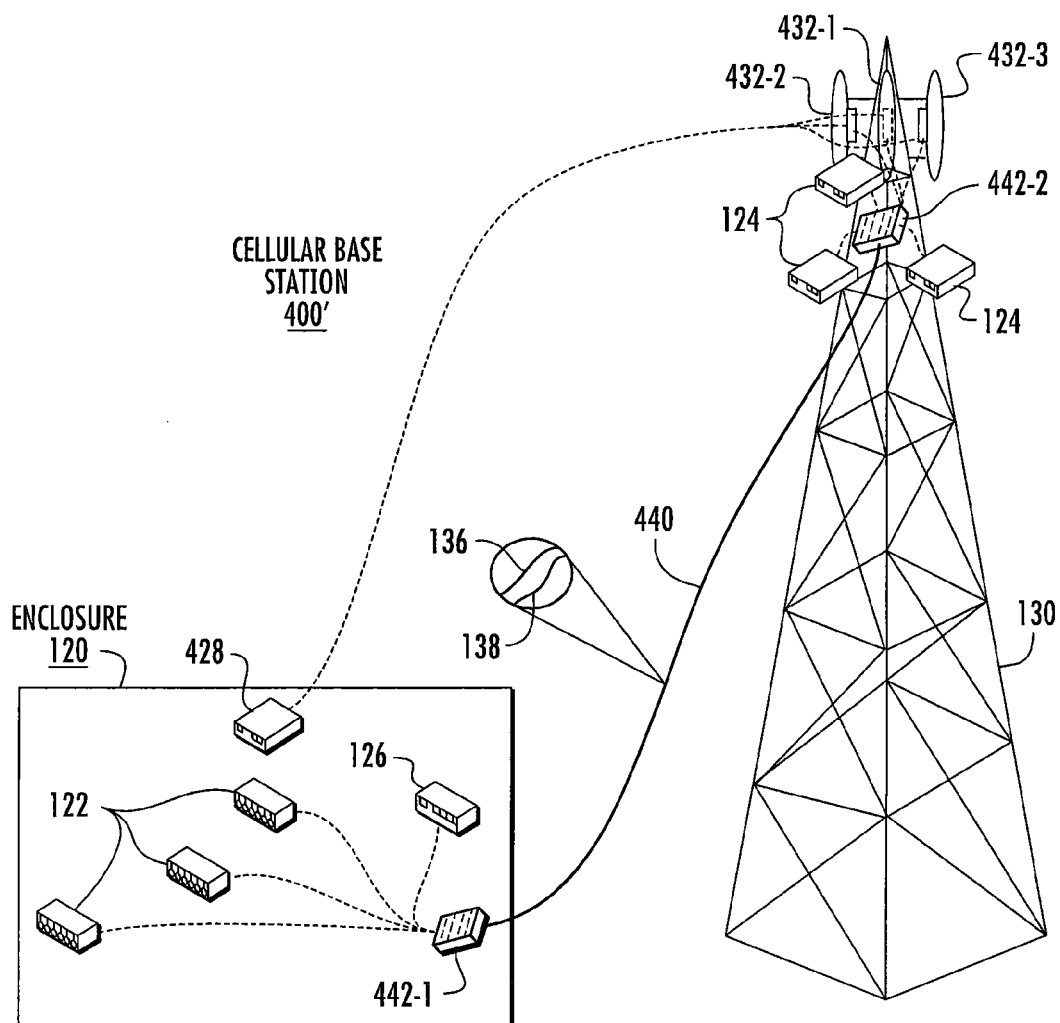


FIG. 8B

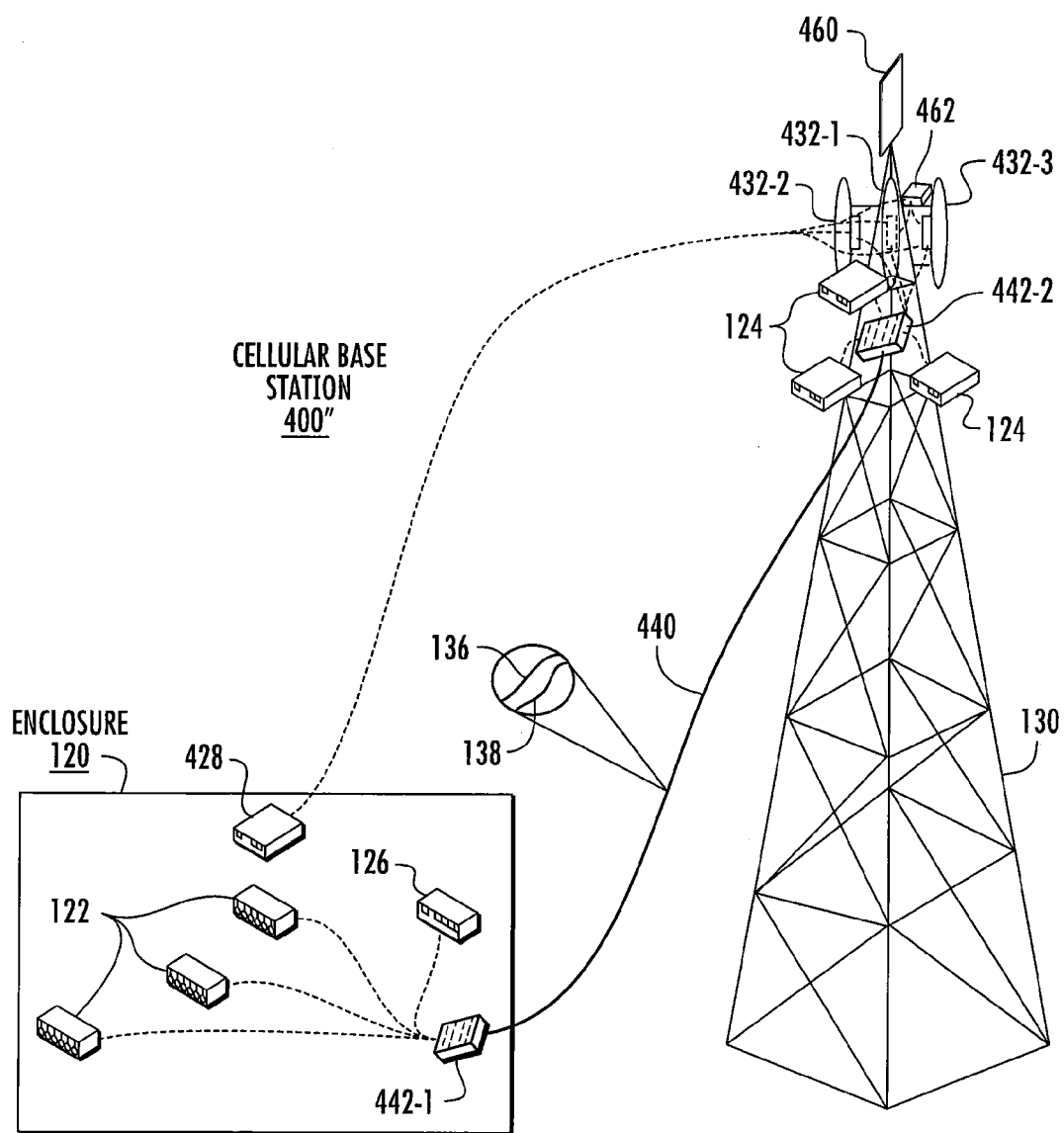


FIG. 8C

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REMOTE RADIO HEADS HAVING WIRELESS JUMPER CONNECTIONS AND RELATED EQUIPMENT, SYSTEMS AND METHODS

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

The present application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. §119 from U.S. Provisional Application Ser. No. 61/991,689, filed May 12, 2014, the entire content of which is incorporated herein by reference.

FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates generally to cellular communications systems and, more particularly, to cellular communications systems that include remote radio heads.

BACKGROUND

Cellular base stations typically include, among other things, one or more radios, baseband units, and antennas. The radio receives digital information and control signals from a baseband unit and modulates this information into a radio frequency (“RF”) signal that is then transmitted through an antenna. The radio also receives RF signals from the antenna and demodulates these signals and supplies them to the baseband unit. The baseband unit processes the demodulated signals received from the radio into a format suitable for transmission over a backhaul communications system. The baseband unit also processes signals received from the backhaul communications system and supplies the processed signals to the radio. A power supply may also be provided that generates suitable direct current (“DC”) power signals for powering the baseband unit and the radio.

In order to increase coverage and signal quality, the antennas in many cellular base stations are located at the top of a tower, which may be, for example, about fifty to two hundred feet tall. Conventionally, the power supply, baseband unit and radio were all located in an equipment enclosure at the bottom of the tower to provide easy access for maintenance, repair and/or later upgrades to the equipment. Coaxial cable(s) were routed from the equipment enclosure to the top of the tower. These coaxial cables carry signal transmissions between the radios and the antennas.

FIG. 1 schematically illustrates a conventional cellular base station 10. As shown in FIG. 1, the cellular base station 10 includes an equipment enclosure 20 and a tower 30. A plurality of baseband units 22 and radios 24, and a power supply 26, are located within the equipment enclosure 20 (while three baseband units 22 and radios 24 are illustrated in FIG. 1, it will be appreciated that more or less baseband units 22 and radios 24 may be provided). Three sectorized antennas 32-1, 32-2, 32-3 are located at the top of the tower 30. Three coaxial cables 34 (which are bundled together outside of the enclosure 20 to appear as a single cable) connect the respective radios 24 to the respective antennas 32-1, 32-2, 32-3. Note that herein when multiple units of an element are provided, each individual unit may be referred to individually by the reference numeral for the element followed by a dash and the number for the individual unit (e.g., antenna 32-2), while multiple units of the element may be referred to collectively by their base reference numeral (e.g., the antennas 32).

In recent years, a shift has occurred and the radios 24 are now more typically located at the top of the tower 30 in new

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or upgraded cellular installations. Radios 24 that are located at the top of the tower 30 are typically referred to as “remote radio heads” 24. Using remote radio heads 24 may significantly improve the quality of the cellular data signals that are transmitted and received by the cellular base station as the use of remote radio heads 24 may reduce signal transmission losses and noise. In particular, the coaxial cables 34 that connect radios 24 at the bottom of a tower 30 to antennas 32 at the top of the tower 30 may be 100-200 feet in length or more. The signal losses that may occur when radio signals at the RF frequencies used by cellular systems (e.g., 1.8 GHz, 3.0 GHz, etc.) are transmitted over such extended lengths of coaxial cable 34 may be very significant, because at these frequencies the coaxial cables 34 exhibit skin effect and dielectric losses which are considerably higher than at low frequencies. Because of this loss in signal power, the signal-to-noise ratio of the RF signals may be degraded in cellular base stations 10 that locate the radios 24 at the bottom of the tower 30 as compared to cellular base stations where remote radio heads 24 are located at the top of the tower 30 next to the antennas 32. The signals are typically transmitted between the baseband units 22 and the remote radio heads 24 in digital form over optical fibers.

FIG. 2 is a schematic diagram that illustrates a cellular base station 10' according to this newer architecture. As shown in FIG. 2, the baseband units 22 and the power supply 26 may still be located at the bottom of the tower 30 in the equipment enclosure 20. The radios 24 in the form of remote radio heads 24 are located at the top of the tower 30 immediately adjacent to the antennas 32. One or more fiber optic cables 38 that include a plurality of optical fibers connect the baseband units 22 to the remote radio heads 24. Fiber optic links may be provided between the baseband units 22 and the remote radio heads 24 because fiber optic cables may be lighter than coaxial cables, and may provide greater bandwidth and lower loss transmissions.

While the use of tower-mounted remote radio heads 24 and fiber optic cables 38 may increase bandwidth and improve signal quality, this architecture also requires that DC power be delivered to the top of the tower 30 to power the remote radio heads 24 (the antennas 32 may be passive devices that do not require an electrical power feed or may have very low power requirements such that they may be powered by a single small cable that carries control communications to the antennas 32). As shown in FIG. 2, this is typically accomplished by running a separate power cable 36 up the tower 30 that provides a DC power supply signal to the remote radio heads 24. The separate power cable 36 is typically bundled with the fiber optic cable(s) 38 so that they may be routed up the tower 30 together. The bundled cable that includes the power cable 36 and fiber optic cable(s) 38 is typically referred to as a “trunk” cable 40. The end of the trunk cable 40 at the bottom of the tower 30 is terminated into a first breakout box 42-1, and the end of the trunk cable 40 at the top of the tower 30 is terminated into a second breakout box 42-2. In some case, the ends of the trunk cable 40 may be pre-terminated into the respective breakout boxes 42-1, 42-2 at the time of manufacture.

In a typical newly-installed cellular installation, three (or more) antennas 32 are mounted on the tower 30, and six, nine or even twelve remote radio heads 24 may be mounted near the antennas 32 at the top of the tower 30. A first set of jumper cables 46 connect the baseband units 22 and the power supply 26 to the first breakout box 42-1, and a second set of jumper cables 48 connect the second breakout box 42-2 to the remote radio heads 24. Each set of jumper cables 46, 48 may include a plurality of data cables and a plurality

of power cables (which in some cases may be combined into a set of composite jumper cables that each include both power and data components). A first end of each jumper cable 46 is terminated into the first breakout box 42-1, and a first end of each jumper cable 48 is terminated into the second breakout box 42-2. At least one jumper cable 48 is connected between the second breakout box 42-2 and each remote radio head 24 to provide power to the remote radio head 24 and to carry uplink and downlink communications between the remote radio head 24 and its associated baseband unit 22 at the bottom of the tower 30.

SUMMARY

Pursuant to embodiments of the present invention, methods of operating a cellular radio are provided in which a first power supply signal is transmitted from a power supply to a wireless power unit at least in part over a power cable. A second power supply signal is wirelessly transmitted from the wireless power unit to the cellular radio to power the cellular radio. Data is transmitted from a baseband unit that is associated with the cellular radio to a wireless transceiver at least in part over a data cable. This data is wirelessly transmitted from the wireless transceiver to the cellular radio. The data is then transmitted through an antenna that is coupled to the cellular radio.

In some embodiments, the wireless power unit may be part of a trunk cable assembly that includes the power cable and the data cable. For example, the wireless power unit may be part of a first cable termination that receives a first end of the trunk cable. In some embodiments, the first cable termination may include a buck converter that reduces an average voltage of the first power supply signal. The trunk cable assembly may include a second cable termination that receives a second end of the trunk cable, the second cable termination including a boost converter that increases an average voltage of the first power supply signal.

In some embodiments, the trunk cable and the first and second cable terminations may together form a sealed trunk cable assembly that cannot be opened in the field. The wireless transceiver may comprise, for example, an 802.11 transceiver, and the first cable termination may be positioned adjacent the remote radio head near the top of a tower. The first cable termination may include a flexible extension, and the wireless power unit may be within this flexible extension.

In some embodiments, the wireless power unit may be an electromagnetic induction unit, and the first cable termination may be positioned adjacent the cellular radio near the top of a tower. The data cable may comprise a fiber optic data cable, and the first cable termination may include an optical-to-electrical converter that converts an optical data signal into an electrical signal that is provided to the wireless transceiver.

In some embodiments, control signals may also be wirelessly transmitted to an antenna line device that is adjacent the cellular radio. A power supply signal may also be wirelessly provided to the antenna line device. The cellular radio and the antenna line device may be located on a tower, an antenna line device controller may be located at the bottom of the tower and may wirelessly transmit the control signals to the top of the tower, and the antenna line device may be powered at least in part by power from solar cells.

Pursuant to embodiments of the present invention, a trunk cable assembly for a cellular base station is provided that includes a conductive power cable, a wireless power unit coupled to the conductive power cable, a fiber optic data

cable, an optical-to-electrical converter that is positioned to receive an optical signal output from the fiber optic data cable, and a wireless transceiver that is coupled to an output of the optical-to-electrical converter.

In some embodiments, the wireless power unit, the optical-to-electrical converter and the wireless transceiver may all be within a first cable termination that receives a first end of the conductive power cable and a first end of the fiber optic data cable. In such embodiments, a common jacket may enclose the conductive power cable and the fiber optic data cable to provide a hybrid fiber optic-power trunk cable, and the first cable termination may be a factory-sealed cable termination that prevents field access to the first ends of the conductive power cable and the fiber optic data cable. The first cable termination may include a buck converter that is configured to reduce an average voltage of a power supply signal carried by the conductive power cable. The first cable termination may also include a flexible extension, and the wireless power unit may be within the flexible extension. The trunk cable assembly may also include a second cable termination that receives a second end of the hybrid fiber optic-power trunk cable, and this second cable termination may include a boost converter that increases an average voltage of the power supply signal. The second cable termination may also include a second wireless power unit coupled to the conductive power cable, a second optical-to-electrical converter, and a second wireless transceiver that is coupled to an output of the second optical-to-electrical converter.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

FIG. 1 is a simplified, schematic view of a conventional cellular base station architecture.

FIG. 2 is a simplified, schematic view of another conventional cellular base station in which remote radio heads are used that are located at the top of the tower.

FIG. 3 is a simplified, schematic view of a cellular base station according to embodiments of the present invention.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram of a trunk cable according to embodiments of the present invention.

FIGS. 5A and 5B are schematic block diagrams illustrating two different wireless power transmission techniques that may be used in embodiments of the present invention.

FIGS. 6A-6C are schematic block diagrams showing the configurations of the remote radio heads, antennas and trunk cables of cellular base stations according to various embodiments of the present invention.

FIG. 7 is a simplified, schematic view of a cellular base station according to further embodiments of the present invention.

FIG. 8A is a simplified, schematic view of a cellular base station according to still further embodiments of the present invention that includes wireless jumpers for ASIG communications to antenna line devices.

FIG. 8B is a schematic view of a modified version of the cellular base station of FIG. 8A.

FIG. 8C is a schematic view of another modified version of the cellular base station of FIG. 8A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

While cellular base stations that use remote radio heads and fiber optic cabling runs up the tower may exhibit improved performance, there are a number of potential difficulties with this architecture. For example, one common problem is that the trunk cable that is delivered to a cellular

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site may turn out to be too long or too short. If too short, the base station installation may be delayed significantly while waiting for a replacement cable. If too long, it may be necessary to provide slack cable storage with an appropriate bend radius, which can also complicate and/or delay the installation. To reduce or prevent these delays, wireless operators or their distributors may find it necessary to stock multiple lengths of cable in order to ensure that the correct cable is always available for installation. Other problems include discarded cable in the event of connector damage, difficulties in field terminating the jumper cables, ensuring that all of the jumper cables remain within their specified bend radii, the need to carefully clean the fiber optic connectors in the field, and field testing of the complete fiber optic link.

Additionally, in the above described architecture, it is necessary to connect the jumper cables at the top of the tower between the second break-out box and the remote radio heads. Typically, this is accomplished by opening the second breakout box once it is installed at the top of the tower and connecting the jumper cables to connectors in the second breakout box that receive the optical fibers and power conductors of the trunk cable. This work may be performed under cramped conditions, tens or hundreds of feet above the ground, under a variety of different environmental conditions (e.g., wind, rain, extreme heat, etc.). As such, the jumper cable connection process may be error prone and potentially very dangerous, as a fall from a cellular tower is almost always a fatal event. Accordingly, the need to terminate the jumper cables into the second break-out box at the top of the tower may significantly increase the cost and complexity of the initial installation of the cellular equipment.

Pursuant to embodiments of the present invention, "wireless jumpers" are provided that wirelessly connect a cable termination of a trunk cable that is located at the top of a cellular base station tower to a plurality of remote radio heads that are likewise located atop the tower. A "wireless jumper" refers to a wireless data connection and/or a wireless power connection that are provided between the trunk cable termination and a remote radio head or other tower-mounted equipment. The use of wireless jumpers may greatly simplify the installation of the equipment at the top of the tower.

Additionally, the use of wireless jumpers may allow sending higher voltage power signals up the power cable portion of the trunk cable. Remote radio heads may have high voltage and current requirements, such as, for example, being required to supply 20 Amperes of current at about 50 Volts DC. Cellular base station towers may also be hundreds of feet tall, and hence these power levels must be supplied over hundreds of feet of power cable. Unfortunately, when DC power is delivered over a transmission line such as a power cable, a power loss occurs that is a function of the current level of the DC power signal and the resistance of the power cable. Since the resistance may be significant over hundreds of feet of cable, high power losses can be expected when delivering DC power to the top of cellular towers. This power loss increases the cost of operating the cellular base station.

In some embodiments of the present invention, the use of wireless jumpers allow the breakout boxes that are conventionally used with trunk cables to be replaced with trunk cable terminations that may be, in some embodiments, attached to each end of a trunk cable and permanently sealed at the factory, as the use of wireless jumpers avoids any need to connect jumper cables to connectors that are located

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within conventional breakout boxes. Typically, the voltage of the power signal that is carried up the power cable to the top of the tower is limited because of safety concerns and/or regulations to less than 100 Volts (e.g., 80-90 Volts) to reduce the risk that technicians may be electrocuted when connecting conventional jumper cables between a breakout box and the remote radio heads. If sealed trunk cable terminations and wireless jumpers are used instead of conventional breakout boxes and jumper cables, then much higher voltage power signals may be transmitted up the power cable. As the power loss is a function of the current, which in turn is inversely proportional to the voltage, the power loss can be reduced by the use of higher voltage power signals. Thus, the use of the wireless jumpers according to embodiments of the present invention may also reduce the power losses associated with powering remote radio heads at the top of a cellular tower or remote radio heads that are at the ends of long horizontal runs such as in tunnel and/or metro-cell applications.

Remote radio heads typically are designed to be powered by a DC power source. As discussed below, wireless power transmission usually (but not always) is performed using AC power signals. Accordingly, in some embodiments of the present invention, the remote radio heads may be designed to be powered by an AC power supply signal. In other embodiments, a DC power supply signal may be transmitted to the wireless jumper, converted to an AC power supply signal, transmitted over the wireless jumper, and then converted back to a DC power supply signal that is used to power the remote radio head. In still other embodiments, an AC power supply signal may be transmitted to and through the wireless jumper, and may then be converted to a DC power supply signal that is used to power the remote radio head. In still other embodiments, DC wireless power transmission techniques may be used (e.g., a laser powered by a DC power source that shines light on a photovoltaic cell) to wirelessly transmit a DC power supply signal.

The wireless jumpers according to embodiments of the present invention may comprise a duplex wireless data connection between the trunk cable termination that is located at or near the top of the tower and each remote radio head. Typically, the data connection between a baseband unit and a remote radio head must support data rates from about 1 Gigabit/second to about 9 Gigabits/second. Any suitable wireless communications technology may be used to implement this wireless data connection including, for example, an IEEE 802.11 ad wireless local area network that provides for wide bandwidth, high data rate, low power communications in the 60 GHz frequency band. Other millimeter wave wireless data applications that support the data rate requirement for the remote radio heads may alternatively be used. The tower-mounted trunk cable termination may include one or more wireless transceivers that communicate with respective wireless transceivers that are provided at each remote radio head to implement these wireless data connections. The trunk cable termination may likewise include optical-to-electrical converters and electrical-to-optical converters that place the uplink data in proper form for wireless transmission to the remote radio head and which place the downlink data received over the wireless jumper from the remote radio head in condition for transmission to the baseband unit over a fiber optic cable. In some embodiments, the remote radio heads may be modified to not include an optical transceiver and to instead just contain the wireless transceiver. This may eliminate one data conversion step, thereby simplifying operations and eliminating one possible point of noise contamination.

The wireless power transmission may be carried out in a variety of ways including, for example the use of electro-magnetic coupling, electrostatic coupling, resonant electro-magnetic induction, microwave power transmission, laser power transmission, etc. The wireless coupling of the power signal may be directional to provide improved efficiency. In some embodiments, the remote radio heads may be located in close proximity to the tower-mounted trunk cable termination to further improve the efficiency of the wireless power transmission.

Embodiments of the present invention will now be discussed in more detail with reference to FIGS. 3-8, in which example embodiments of the present invention are shown.

FIG. 3 is a schematic diagram that illustrates a cellular base station 100 according to embodiments of the present invention. As shown in FIG. 3, the cellular base station 100 includes a plurality of baseband units 122 that are within an equipment enclosure 120. Each baseband unit 122 may be connected to a backhaul communications system (not shown). A power supply 126 may also be provided in the equipment enclosure 120. The equipment enclosure 120 is typically located at the bottom of a cellular tower 130. A plurality of remote radio heads 124 and three antennas 132 (e.g., three sectorized antennas 132-1, 132-2, 132-3) are mounted on the tower 130, typically near the top thereof. A trunk cable 140 is routed from the equipment enclosure 120 to the top of the tower 130. A first trunk cable termination 142-1 is connected to the first end of the trunk cable 140. The first trunk cable termination 142-1 may be located, for example, in the equipment enclosure 120. A second trunk cable termination 142-2 is connected to the other end of the trunk cable 140, and may be installed at the top of the tower 130. Together the trunk cable 140 and the trunk cable terminations 142-1, 142-2 comprise a trunk cable assembly.

Each remote radio head 124 receives digital information and control signals from a respective one of the baseband units 122 over a fiber optic data cable 138 that is part of the trunk cable 140 that is routed from the enclosure 120 to the top of the tower 130. Each remote radio head 124 modulates this information into a radio frequency ("RF") signal that is then transmitted through a respective one of the antennas 132. Each remote radio head 124 also receives RF signals from a respective one of the antennas 132 and demodulates these signals and supplies them to its respective baseband unit 122 over the fiber optic data cable 138. The baseband unit 122 processes the demodulated signals received from the remote radio head 124 and forwards the processed signals to a backhaul communications system (not shown). The baseband unit 122 also processes signals received from the backhaul communications system and supplies them to the remote radio head 124.

As shown in the callout in FIG. 3, the trunk cable 140 may include a power cable 136 and the fiber optic data cable 138. The power cable 136 may include at least two insulated conductors. In some embodiments, a pair of insulated conductors are included in the power cable 136 for each remote radio head 124. In other embodiments, only two insulated conductors may be provided, and the power supply signal may be divided into multiple power supply signals at the second cable termination 142-2 and distributed to the remote radio heads 124. In still other embodiments, a single ground conductor may be provided and separate power conductors may be provided for each remote radio head 124. Other configurations are also possible.

The fiber optic data cable 138 may include a plurality of optical fibers (not visible in FIG. 3). Typically, a pair of single-mode optical fibers are provided for each remote

radio head 124, one of which carries uplink data that is transmitted from one of the baseband units 122 to the remote radio head 124 for transmission through one of the antennas 132, and the second of which carries downlink data that is received at the antenna 132, demodulated by the remote radio head 124 and transmitted to the baseband unit 122. It will be appreciated, however, that more or fewer optical fibers may be used in other embodiments, and that more than one fiber optic cable 138 may be used.

Wireless jumpers are used at the top of the tower 130 to transmit the data and power supply signals between the second cable termination 142-2 and the remote radio heads 124. These wireless connections are illustrated in FIG. 3 using dotted lines. Likewise, wireless jumpers are used at the bottom of the tower 130 to transmit the data and power supply signals between the first cable termination 142-1 and the baseband units 122 and power supply 126. In some embodiments, wired data and/or power connections may be used at the bottom of the tower 130 to connect the baseband units 122 and/or the power supply 126 to the trunk cable 140.

FIG. 4 is a schematic diagram of a trunk cable assembly 200 according to certain embodiments of the present invention that may be used as the trunk cable assembly of FIG. 3. As shown in FIG. 4, the trunk cable assembly 200 includes a hybrid cable 202, a first cable termination 230-1 and a second cable termination 230-2. The hybrid cable 202 includes both a power cable 210 and a data cable 220. In the depicted embodiment, the power cable 210 comprises a plurality of pairs 216 of copper conductors 212, 214. Each conductor 212 may comprise a "positive" conductor that is connected to a positive port on the power supply 126, and each conductor 214 may comprise a "negative" conductor that is connected to a ground port on the power supply 126. In some embodiments, a pair 216 of conductors 212, 214 may be provided for each remote radio head 124 (three pairs 216 are provided in the embodiment of FIG. 4, although one of the conductors 214 is not visible in the view of FIG. 4). The conductors 212, 214 may be individually insulated from one another, and may be surrounded by a common jacket 218.

The data cable 220 may comprise, for example, a fiber optic cable 220 that includes a plurality of optical fibers 222 and other components such as strength fibers 224, a buffer tube 226 and a jacket 228. The power cable 210 and the data cable 220 may be contained within a common protective jacket 204.

The second cable termination 230-2 may comprise, for example, a factory-sealed enclosure 232 that receives the hybrid cable 202 through an aperture 234 on one side of the enclosure 232. The remote radio heads 124 will typically be positioned on different sides of the enclosure 232. The pairs 216 of conductors 212, 214 of the power cable 210 may be separated within the enclosure 232, and each pair 216 may be routed to a different side of the enclosure 232 that is adjacent one of the remote radio heads 124 to provide a power connection to the respective remote radio head 124.

As discussed above, a wireless power connection may be used to transmit the power supply signal between each pair of conductors 212, 214 and a respective one of the remote radio heads 124. Accordingly, a wireless power transmission device 236 may be connected to each conductor 212. Likewise, a wireless power reception device 238 may be coupled to each conductor 214. The wireless power transmission and reception devices 236, 238 may couple a power supply signal to corresponding wireless power transmission and reception devices 236, 238 that may be provided at each

remote radio head **124** (not shown in FIG. 4). The wireless power transmission and reception devices **236**, **238** form a wireless power unit **236/238** that may be used to wirelessly transmit a power supply signal from the second cable termination **230-2** to a remote radio head **124**.

As noted above, remote radio heads **124** typically are designed to be powered by a DC power source. However, most wireless power transmission techniques couple AC as opposed to DC power supply signals. Accordingly, in some embodiments of the present invention, the remote radio heads **124** may be designed to be powered by an AC power supply signal, and the power supply **126** may output an AC power supply signal that is transmitted to the second cable termination **230-2** for wireless transmission to a remote radio head **124**. In other embodiments, a DC power supply signal may be transmitted to the second cable termination **230-2**, where it is converted to an AC power supply signal by a DC-to-AC power conversion circuit. The DC-to-AC power conversion circuit may, for example, be part of the wireless power unit **236/238**. The second cable termination **230-2** wirelessly transmits this AC power supply signal to the remote radio head **124**, where it is converted back to a DC power supply signal by a corresponding AC-to-DC conversion circuit in the remote radio head **124**. In still other embodiments, an AC power supply signal may be transmitted from the power supply **126** to the second cable termination **230-2** where it is wirelessly transmitted to the remote radio head **124**. The remote radio head **124** may again include an AC-to-DC power conversion circuit that converts this AC power supply signal to a DC power supply signal that is used to power the remote radio head **124**. It will be appreciated that in embodiments which include AC-to-DC or DC-to-AC power conversion, such power conversion will be done on both the positive and negative legs of the circuit. In still other embodiments, techniques may be used to wirelessly transmit a DC power supply signal so that AC-to-DC or DC-to-AC power conversion is not necessary.

The wireless power connection may be implemented in a variety of different ways. For example, in some embodiments, electromagnetic induction may be used to transmit the power supply signal between each pair of power conductors **212**, **214** and a corresponding pair of power conductors in each respective remote radio head **124**. As shown in FIG. 5A, in such embodiments, the wireless power transmission device **236** and the wireless power reception device **238** that are included in the second cable termination **230-2** of the trunk cable assembly **200** of FIG. 4 may be implemented as a primary coil **240-1** or other inductor that is electrically connected to the conductors **212**, **214**. The remote radio head **124** includes a secondary coil **240-2** that likewise acts as a combination wireless power transmission device **236** and wireless power reception device **238**. The current flowing through the primary coil **240-1** creates a magnetic field. The magnetic field generated by the primary coil **240-1** induces a current in the secondary coil **240-2**. This current may be used to power the remote radio head **124**. Thus, the primary coil **240-1** and the secondary coil **240-2** together form an electrical transformer **242** that performs the wireless power transmission. Electrical transformers are widely used today for wireless power transmission over very short distances such as, for example, for charging batteries in cellular telephones and laptop and tablet computers, and other appliances such as electric toothbrushes and electric razors. The primary difficulty with this type of wireless power transmission is that it becomes highly inefficient with increasing distance between the pri-

mary and secondary coils **240-1**, **240-2**. Accordingly, each pair of coils **240-1**, **240-2** may be located in close proximity.

The application of resonance may increase the transmission range for wireless power transmission. For example, with reference to the embodiment of FIG. 5A, with resonant coupling, the primary coil **240-1** and the secondary coil **240-2** may be tuned to the same natural frequency. Resonant magnetic coupling may transfer power over relatively large distances, potentially with high efficiency levels. The wireless power transmission circuitry may be designed so that the magnetic field generated by the primary coil interacts only weakly with other objects on the tower while coupling heavily with the secondary coil. For example, WiTricity advertises wireless power systems that use resonant magnetic coupling to provide highly efficient energy transfer over extended distances at power levels ranging up to several kilowatts. Moreover, the electric fields generated by the power supply source (here the primary coils **240-1**) may be contained almost completely within the source, thereby avoiding radio frequency emissions that might otherwise interfere with the wireless communications between the cable terminations and the remote radio heads and/or the wireless transmissions through the base station antennas. Resonant magnetic coupling may also be designed to wrap around metallic objects that might otherwise block the magnetic fields. Performance may be improved further by using a non-sinusoidal drive current. In such embodiments, the primary and secondary coils **240-1**, **240-2** may comprise, for example, solenoids or flat spirals with parallel capacitors that form mutually-tuned LC circuits. In this approach an alternating current ("AC") power signal may be supplied from the power supply **126** to the second cable termination **230-2**, and thus AC-to-DC and DC-to-AC conversion may need to be performed in the remote radio heads **124** if the remote radio heads **124** are designed to run on DC power signals.

In other embodiments, the wireless power transmission may be performed via electrostatic induction (i.e., capacitive coupling). As shown in FIG. 5B, in this approach, the wireless power transmission device **236** that is included in the second cable termination **230-2** of the trunk cable assembly **200** of FIG. 4 may be implemented as a first electrode **250-1** of a first capacitor **254-1** and the wireless power reception device **238** that is included in the second cable termination **230-2** of the trunk cable assembly **200** of FIG. 4 may be implemented as the first electrode **252-1** of a second capacitor **254-2**. The second electrode **252-2** of the first capacitor **254-1** acts as a second wireless power reception device **238** that is provided in the remote radio head **124**, and the second electrode **250-2** of the second capacitor **254-2**, which is likewise provided in the remote radio head **124**, acts as a second wireless power transmission device **236**. A high voltage, high frequency AC power current is used to charge the first electrode **250-1** of the first capacitor **254-1**. One or more dielectric materials (e.g., air, high-k dielectric constant materials, etc.) are provided between the first electrode **250-1** and the second electrode **252-2**. A portion of the AC power supply signal may be capacitively coupled from the first electrode **250-1** to the second electrode **252-2** to wirelessly provide a power supply signal to the remote radio head **124**. The return path for the power supply signal may be wirelessly transmitted across the second capacitor **254-2** in the same manner.

Microwave power transmission may be used in still other embodiments. With this approach, the wireless transmission device **236** may comprise a radio and an antenna that are used to convert the power supply signal into a microwave

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signal that is transmitted to the wireless reception device **238**. The wireless reception device **238** then converts the received microwave signal back into a power supply signal. Microwave power transmission may exhibit very high efficiencies as compared to other forms of wireless power transmission.

In yet another approach, power may be wirelessly transmitted by converting electrical energy into a laser beam or other light source that is pointed at a photovoltaic cell that is used to convert the received light from the laser beam into an electrical power signal. Magnetic beam forming is another approach that may be used. With this approach, a magnetic beam or wave may be generated at a source and directed (wirelessly) at a magnetic metal that is located at the target. The magnetic beam may induce a vibration in the magnetic metal, and this mechanical energy may be converted into electrical power.

In addition to the wireless power connection, a wireless data connection may be provided between each remote radio head **124** and the second cable termination **230-2**. As shown in FIG. 4, this may be accomplished, for example, by terminating the optical fibers **222** of the fiber optic data cable **220** into a wireless transceiver **260-1**. The wireless transceiver **260-1** may include an optical-to-electrical converter that converts the optical data carried over the uplink optical fiber **222** into RF signals that may be transmitted by the wireless transceiver **260-1** to a corresponding wireless transceiver **260-2** that is provided at each remote radio head **124**. The wireless transceiver **260-1** may also include an electrical-to-optical converter that converts the downlink data received from the remote radio head **124** into an optical signal that may be transmitted over another of the optical fibers **222** to the baseband unit **122**. In some embodiments, the wireless transceivers **260-1**, **260-2** may be, for example, transceivers that transmit data at low power in the millimeter-wave frequency ranges (e.g., in the 30 GHz to 85 GHz frequency range). IEEE 802.11ad transceivers, which operate in the 60 GHz frequency band, represent one suitable type of transceiver.

In some embodiments, a plurality of mated pairs of transceivers **260** may be provided at the top of the tower **130**, with one transceiver **260-1** of each pair located in the second cable termination **230-2** and the other transceiver **260-2** of each pair associated with a respective one of the remote radio heads **124**. In such an embodiment, each transceiver **260** of a pair can be assigned a particular frequency sub-band such that the transceivers **260** of the pair only transmit and receive signals in the assigned frequency sub-band. Each pair may be assigned to a different, non-overlapping frequency sub-band so that the wireless transmissions between the second cable termination **230-2** and the remote radio heads **124** do not interfere with each other.

In other embodiments, a single wireless transceiver **260-1** may be provided in the second cable termination **230-2**, and all of the uplink and downlink optical fibers **222** may be connected to this single wireless transceiver **260-1**. Appropriate multiple access techniques such as, for example, frequency division multiple access ("FDMA") techniques, time division multiple access ("TDMA") techniques and/or FDMA/TDMA techniques may be used to ensure that the uplink data carried by each uplink optical fiber **222** is received at the correct remote radio head **124**, and to likewise ensure that the received downlink data is delivered to the appropriate baseband unit **122**. In still other embodiments, spread spectrum multiple access techniques may be used. The transceivers **260-1**, **260-2** may support data rates which may be sufficient to carry the full uplink and downlink

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transmissions between the remote radio heads **124** and the second cable termination **230-2**. It will be appreciated that any appropriate wireless transmission technique may be used to form the wireless jumper for data transmission.

In still other embodiments, the transceivers **260** in the second cable termination **230-2** and in the remote radio heads **124** may have highly directional beamforming capabilities so that the transceiver pairs may transmit in the same frequency band but avoid interference via spatial diversity. In one example embodiment, each of the transceivers **260** in the second cable termination **230-2** and in the remote radio heads **124** may include a phased array antenna. The phased array antennas of the transceivers **260-1** in the second cable termination **230-2** may be generally pointed in one of three directions, so that each phased array antenna in the second cable termination **230-2** is generally pointed in the direction of a corresponding remote radio head **124**. Likewise, the wireless transceivers **260-2** in the remote radio heads may all have phased array antennas that generally point towards the second cable termination **230-2**.

In some embodiments, a calibration process may be used to determine the weights used on each radiating element of the phased array. For example, the phased array antenna on the first transceiver **260-1** of a transceiver pair may start by sending out a broad-beam signal that is received by the second transceiver **260-2** of the pair. The first transceiver **260-1** then sends out a second signal using a narrower beam that covers, for example the right-half of the first beam, and then sends out a third signal that covers the left half of the first beam. The second transceiver **260-2** of the pair determines which of the second and third signals is stronger, and notifies the first transceiver **260-1** of the pair as to which received signal was stronger. The first transceiver **260-1** then repeats this process by sending out two additional signals, one for each half of the beam associated with the stronger received signal. By this process, the beam of the phased array antenna of the first transceiver **260-1** of the pair may be progressively narrowed so that a narrow beam is formed that points directly at the second transceiver **260-2** of the pair. This calibration process may be performed for each of the phased array antennas in order to implement spatial diversity so that all of the transceivers can transmit and receive signals in the same frequency band. Various methods for implementing beamsteering are discussed, for example, in an article by Abbas Abbaspour-Tamijani and Kamal Sarabandi available at <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.132.8520&rep=rep1&type=pdf> and in an article available at http://www.ece.ucsb.edu/wcs/Publications/eric_itwc2011.pdf, each of which are incorporated herein by reference.

Referring again to FIG. 4, it can be seen that the first cable termination **230-1** may be identical to the second cable termination **230-2**. Accordingly, further description thereof will be omitted here.

FIGS. 6A-6C are schematic block diagrams showing the configurations of the remote radio heads, antennas and trunk cables of cellular base stations according to various embodiments of the present invention. These configurations may be used, for example, in the cellular base station **100** of FIG. 3.

As shown in FIG. 6A, in a first configuration, the three antennas **132-1**, **132-2**, **132-3** may be positioned to form an equilateral triangle. Three remote radio heads **124-1**, **124-2**, **124-3** may be positioned immediately adjacent the respective antennas **132**. The second cable termination **142-2** may be located generally in the center of the tower **130**, and may be separated by, for example, 5-15 feet from each of the remote radio heads **124**. Each remote radio head **124** may be

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positioned in very close proximity to its corresponding antenna **132** to reduce RF signal losses in the coaxial cable connections between each remote radio head **124** and its corresponding antenna **132**.

As shown in FIG. 6B, in a second configuration, the three antennas **132-1**, **132-2**, **132-3** may again be positioned to form an equilateral triangle. The three remote radio heads **124-1**, **124-2**, **124-3** may be positioned immediately adjacent to respective sides of the second cable termination **142-2**. This may provide for more efficient wireless power transmission between the second cable termination **142-2** and the respective remote radio heads **124**. In this configuration, longer coaxial cable connections **146** may be required between each of the remote radio heads **124** and its corresponding antenna **132**. These longer connections may result in increased RF signal losses.

As shown in FIG. 6C, in a third configuration, the three antennas **132-1**, **132-2**, **132-3** may again be positioned to form an equilateral triangle. The three remote radio heads **124-1**, **124-2**, **124-3** may be positioned immediately adjacent the respective antennas **132**, as in the first configuration of FIG. 6A. The second cable termination **142-2** is located generally in the center of the tower **130**, and may be separated by, for example, 5-15 feet from each of the remote radio heads **124**. In this embodiment, the second cable termination **142-2** includes a plurality of flexible extensions **150**. Each flexible extension **150** may comprise a cable segment **152** having a small enclosure **154** on an end thereof. The cable segment **152** may include, for example, an uplink optical fiber **222-1**, a downlink optical fiber **222-2**, a positive power conductor **212** and a negative power conductor **214**, all of which may be enclosed in a protective jacket or conduit. The enclosure **154** may include a wireless power transmission device **236**, a wireless power reception device **238** and a wireless transceiver **260**. Each of these components may operate in the same manner as the corresponding components of FIG. 4, so further description thereof will be omitted. The enclosure **154** may be designed to be easily attached to a respective one of the remote radio heads **124** via, for example, snap clips, a magnetic connection, insertion within a receptacle on the remote radio head **124**, etc. The attachment point for the enclosure **154** on the remote radio head **124** may be immediately adjacent a wireless power transmission device **236**, a wireless power reception device **238** and a wireless transceiver **260** of the remote radio head **124**. In this design, the antennas **132** may be located in very close proximity to their corresponding remote radio heads **124** in order to provide low RF signal loss levels, and the wireless power transmission and reception devices of the second cable termination **142-2** and the remote radio heads **124** may likewise be located immediately adjacent to each other in order to ensure efficient wireless power transmission.

Pursuant to further embodiments of the present invention, wireless jumpers may be used to reduce power losses associated with delivering a power signal to the remote radio heads **124**.

The DC voltage of a power signal that is supplied to a remote radio head from a power supply over a power cable may be determined as follows:

$$V_{RRH} = V_{PS} - V_{Drop} \quad (1)$$

where V_{RRH} is the DC voltage of the power signal delivered to the remote radio head, V_{PS} is the DC voltage of the power signal that is output by the power supply, and V_{Drop} is the decrease in the DC voltage that occurs as the DC power

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signal traverses the cabling from the power supply to the remote radio head. V_{Drop} may be determined according to Ohm's Law as follows:

$$V_{Drop} = I_{RRH} * R_{Cable} \quad (2)$$

where R_{Cable} is the electrical resistance (in Ohms) of the power cable connecting the power supply to the remote radio head and I_{RRH} is the average current (in Amperes) flowing through the power cable to the remote radio head.

The electrical resistance R_{Cable} of the power cable is inversely proportional to the diameter of the conductor of the power cable. Thus, the larger the diameter of the conductor (i.e., the lower the gauge of the conductor), the lower the resistance of the power cable. Typically, power cables utilize copper conductors due to the low resistance of copper. Copper resistance is specified in terms of unit length, typically milliohms (mΩ)/ft for a specified cross-sectional area; as such, the cumulative electrical resistance of the power cable increases with the length of the cable. Thus, the longer the power cable, the higher the voltage drop V_{Drop} .

Typically, a minimum required supply voltage, a nominal or recommended supply voltage and a maximum supply voltage will be specified for the remote radio head. Thus, the power supply must output a voltage V_{PS} such that V_{RRH} will be between the minimum and maximum supply voltages of the remote radio head. As V_{Drop} is a function of the current I_{RRH} that is supplied to the remote radio head (see Equation 2 above), if V_{PS} (the voltage output by the power supply) is constant, then the voltage V_{RRH} that is delivered to the remote radio head will change with the variation in current drawn by the remote radio head. Conventionally, the voltage output by the power supply (V_{PS}) is set to ensure that the nominal supply voltage is supplied to the remote radio head (or at least a value above the minimum supply voltage) when the remote radio head draws the maximum anticipated amount of current.

The power that is lost (P_{Loss}) in delivering the power supply signal to the remote radio head over a power cable may be calculated as follows:

$$P_{Loss} = V_{Drop} * I_{RRH} = (I_{RRH} * R_{Cable}) * I_{RRH} = I_{RRH}^2 * R_{Cable} \quad (3)$$

Thus, the higher the current flowing through the power cable to the remote radio head the higher the power loss.

As noted above, when conventional trunk cables are used as in the conventional cellular base station **10'** of FIG. 2 that is discussed above, technicians must connect jumper cables from the breakout box **42-2** at the top of the tower **30** to each remote radio head **24** in order to provide power and data connections to each remote radio head **24**. This, in turn, requires that a technician open the breakout box **42-2** at the top of the tower **30**, connect each jumper cable **46** between the breakout box **42-2** and the remote radio heads **24**, and then close the breakout box **42-2**. This practice can create many issues for installers, including time, safety, connection errors (such as loose power connections and/or poor fiber cleaning), and more opportunity for connector damage. Moreover, because of the safety concerns, the voltage V_{RRH} (i.e., the DC voltage of the power signal delivered to the remote radio head) may be limited to a maximum value based on, for example, safety regulations. Accordingly, the use of higher voltages may not be available as a mechanism for reducing the current I_{RRH} as a means of reducing the power loss (since the power loss increases as a square of the current I_{RRH}).

As noted above, pursuant to embodiments of the present invention, trunk cable assemblies having factory-sealed cable terminations **142-1**, **142-2** may be used in place of

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combination of a trunk cable **40** and breakout boxes **42-1**, **42-2** that are used in conventional approaches, since there is no need to connect power or data jumper cables within breakout boxes. When such a sealed cable terminations **142-1**, **142-2** are used, each cable termination **142-1**, **142-2** may further include a buck power converter or a boost power converter. In particular, cable termination **142-1** may include a boost power converter that may increase the DC voltage that is wirelessly provided from the power supply **126** to cable termination **142-1** to a much higher DC voltage (e.g., a 50 Volt DC power supply signal may be provided by the power supply may be increased to, for example, 300 Volts). This 300 Volt DC power supply signal may then be carried up the tower **130** through the power cable **210** of trunk cable **140**. The cable termination **142-2** may include a buck converter that decreases the DC voltage from, for example, 295 Volts (here we are assuming a voltage drop of 5 Volts) to 50 Volts, or some other voltage that is appropriate for provision to the remote radio heads **124**. Since the voltage V_{RRH} of the power supply signal that is carried by power cable **210** is much higher than normal, the current I_{RRH} on the power cable **210** is reduced linearly, and the power loss P_{Loss} is reduced exponentially. This may reduce the cost of powering the remote radio heads **124** and thereby reduce the operating costs of the cellular base station **100**. As a typical remote radio head **124** may require about a kilowatt of power and is run twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week, the operational cost savings may be significant.

FIG. 7 is a simplified, schematic view of a cellular base station **300** according to further embodiments of the present invention. As shown in FIG. 7, the cellular base station **300** is similar to the cellular base station **100** that is described above with reference to FIG. 3. However, in the embodiment of FIG. 7, the cellular base station **300** is a so-called "metro-cell" base station which refers to a lower power type of cellular base station that is commonly implemented in urban areas atop telephone poles or other structures that are smaller than conventional cellular antenna towers. In the depicted embodiment, antennas **132** and remote radio heads **124** are mounted on a telephone pole **330** which may be, for example, about 20-30 feet tall. In the embodiment of FIG. 7, wireless power and data transmission is used to carry the power and data signals from the enclosure **120** to the top of the telephone pole **330**. As such, the trunk cable **140** of FIG. 3 is replaced with a cable termination **342**. The cable termination **342** receives data from the baseband units **122** over wired connections, and also receives a DC power supply signal from the power supply **126**. Each remote radio head **124** includes a wireless power transmission device, a wireless power reception device and a wireless transceiver, as is discussed above with reference to FIG. 5. The wireless power and data jumpers extend from the cable termination **342** to the remote radio heads **124**. Thus, in the embodiment of FIG. 7, no trunk cable is required. This provides additional advantages, including decreased weight and wind loading on the telephone pole **330**, and elimination of the risk of theft of a trunk cable, which is all too common due to the high price of copper. This approach may also be used in conventional cellular base stations.

In some cellular installations, data may be transmitted to the antennas, the data being used to control the antennas or to collect sensor data from the antennas. The Antenna Interface Standards Group ("AISG") is a non-profit consortium that has developed a standard for digital remote control and monitoring of antennas and related equipment used in the wireless industry. Pursuant to the AISG standard, an RS-485 multi-device wired communication bus is provided

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that may carry control signals used to control, for example, tower-mounted power amplifiers and low noise amplifiers, antenna tilt control devices, other antenna control units and the like. The devices that receive AISG signals are referred to herein as "antenna line devices." The communication bus may be configured, for example, in a daisy chain configuration or a star configuration in order to connect, for example, multiple antenna line devices on a tower to ground-based controller. The communication bus connects directly to each of the antenna line devices.

The AISG control signals may include, for example, location information that is provided by Global Positioning Satellite transceivers that are included in the antenna line devices (which may allow a wireless carrier to confirm that the antenna line devices were installed in the correct location), alarm signals (e.g., if a tilt angle of an antenna exceeds a predefined threshold), control signals for antenna movement or beamsteering, etc. The antenna line device controller may initiate all communications with the antenna line devices.

Pursuant to further embodiments of the present invention, the RS-485 communication bus AISG signals may be converted to an appropriate wireless signal, transmitted to the antenna line devices, and then converted back into an RS-485 signal. In some embodiments, the RS-485 cable may be incorporated into the aforementioned trunk cable assemblies. One or more additional wireless transceivers may then be included in one or both trunk cable terminations that convert the RS-485 bus signals into a wireless signal, and transmit the wireless signal to the one or more antenna line devices. The antenna line devices may convert the received wireless signal back into an RS-485 bus signal that is used to control the antenna line devices. Wireless power jumpers may also be included in each of the antenna line devices that provide the power necessary to power the AISG bus and the active circuitry in the antenna line devices (e.g., processors, tilt motors, etc.). Any of the wireless power techniques previously described may be used, and hence further description of the wireless power jumpers used to power the antenna line devices will be omitted here.

AISG signals are relatively low data rate communications. Accordingly, a number of different low data rate wireless solutions may be used to implement the wireless data jumpers from the trunk cable termination to the antenna line devices such as, for example, Bluetooth or Zigbee communications. Bluetooth and Zigbee are both low power consumption, low cost wireless networking protocols that may be incorporated into the antenna line devices and the trunk cable terminations. Moreover, since some low cost, low data rate protocols such as, for example, Zigbee have fairly extended ranges (e.g., up to 75 meters), in some embodiments, the wireless AISG communications may be transmitted from the bottom of the tower to the antenna line devices, thereby avoiding any need to incorporate the RS-485 cable into the trunk cable (or to run a separate RS-485 cable up the tower).

FIG. 8A is a simplified, schematic view of a cellular base station **400** according to still further embodiments of the present invention that includes wireless jumpers for AISG communications to antenna line devices. As shown in FIG. 8A, the cellular base station **400** is similar to the cellular base station **100** that is described above with reference to FIG. 3. However, the cellular base station **400** further includes an antenna line device controller **428** that may be located, for example, in the enclosure **120**, and each of the antennas comprise antenna line devices **432** that are powered devices. A trunk cable assembly is provided that

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includes a trunk cable **440** and first and second trunk cable terminations **442-1**, **442-2**. The trunk cable **440** is similar to the trunk cable **140** described above with reference to FIG. 3, except that it further includes an RS-485 cable **439**. The first and second trunk cable terminations **442-1**, **442-2** are similar to the first and second trunk cable terminations **142-1**, **142-2** that are described above, except that each trunk cable termination **442-1**, **442-2** further includes one or more low-power transceivers such as Zigbee transceivers. As described above, the low-power transceivers in the second trunk cable termination **442-2** may convert AISG control signals that are received over the RS-485 cable **439** to an appropriate wireless signal, and then transmit the wireless signal to corresponding low-power transceivers that are provided in the antenna line devices **432**. The low-power wireless transceivers may also receive wireless communications that are transmitted by the low-power wireless transceivers in the antenna line devices **432** and convert these received signals into RS-485 signals that are then transmitted to the antenna line device controller **428** over the RS-485 cable **439**. The second cable termination **442-2** may also include a plurality of wireless power jumpers that wirelessly transmit a power supply signal to each of the antenna line devices **432**.

FIG. 8B is a schematic view of a cellular base station **400'** that is a modified version of the cellular base station **400** of FIG. 8A. As is readily apparent, the primary difference between the cellular base stations **400** and **400'** is that in the cellular base station **400'** the RS-485 cable **439** is omitted, and the AISG signals are wirelessly transmitted from the antenna line device controller **428** that is located at the bottom of tower **130** to the antenna line devices **432** at the top of tower **130**. An appropriate wireless data transmission protocol such as Zigbee may be used that has sufficient range to wirelessly transmit the AISG control signals from the bottom of the tower **130** to the top of the tower **130** with sufficient quality of service. The power supply signal for the antenna line devices **432** may be wirelessly transmitted to each antenna line device **432** from the second cable termination **442-2**.

FIG. 8C is a schematic view of a cellular base station **400"** that is another modified version of the cellular base station **400** of FIG. 8A. As is readily apparent, the primary difference between the cellular base stations **400** and **400"** is that in the cellular base station **400"**, wireless power connections are not provided to the antenna line devices **432** and, instead, these devices **432** are powered via a solar cell **460** and a rechargeable battery or hydrogen fuel cell **462**. Such an arrangement is possible because the antenna line devices **432** may be very low-power devices that can be run off of battery power. The solar cell **460** is provided to recharge the battery/fuel cell **462** in order to avoid the need for tower climbs to replace worn out batteries. It will be appreciated that the embodiment of FIG. 8B may likewise be modified to power the antenna line devices **432** via the solar cell **460** and batteries/hydrogen fuel cell **462**.

While embodiments of the present invention have primarily been described above with reference to conventional remote radio heads, it will be appreciated that a new generation of remote radio heads is under development that combine the remote radio head and the base station antenna into a single unit that receives digital data and outputs a radiated RF signal. Remote radio heads having this new configuration are sometimes referred to as "active antennas." Active antennas may place the transceiver very close to the radiating elements of the antenna structure and eliminate the need for a traditional cabling connection

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between the remote radio head and the antenna, which may reduce signal loss (since the signal transmitted by the remote radio head is at cellular RF frequencies, and signal losses are high when transmitting such signals over coaxial cable). In active antenna arrangements, the high power amplifier may be incorporated into the radiating elements, so low power RF signals may pass between the transceiver and the amplifier/radiating elements on, for example, a short path on a printed circuit board. Signal losses may be significantly lower due to the elimination of cabling connectors, the reduction in the length of the RF signal path and the transmission of a lower power RF signal. Thus, it will be appreciated that all of the embodiments disclosed herein may be implemented using either or both conventional remote radio heads and/or active antennas as the cellular radios.

Likewise, embodiments of the present invention have primarily been described above with respect to conventional cellular base stations that have antennas mounted on an antenna tower. It will be appreciated, however, that all of the above described embodiments may be implemented in cellular base stations in which the cellular radios (i.e., conventional remote radio heads and/or active antennas) are mounted on other tower structures such as on the sides or tops of buildings, water towers, utility poles and the like, or inside structures such as stadiums, shopping malls, tunnels and the like.

The techniques according to embodiments of the present invention may offer a number of advantages. For example, the wireless data connections may reduce or eliminate the need for cleaning fiber optic connectors, stocking, ordering and distributing jumpers of particular lengths, testing fiber optic links, and the like. The installation of the equipment at the top of the tower may be simplified significantly, and may be made much safer and less expensive. The use of factory-sealed trunk cable assemblies may allow the use of higher voltage power supply signals, which may reduce power losses. Additionally, with the use of wireless power transmission techniques it is likely that remote radio heads will be developed that are powered by AC power supply signals. As AC power supply signals may generally be transmitted more efficiently than DC power supply signals, this may further reduce power losses.

Additionally, as discussed above, in some embodiments the wireless power and/or data transmission may be performed from the equipment enclosure at the bottom of the tower. In such embodiments, the need for a trunk cable can be eliminated entirely. Trunk cables are expensive to purchase, expensive to install, and create significant loads on the tower that require more robust tower structures. As such, the use of trunk cables can significantly increase the expense of a cellular base station. Additionally, because trunk cables include a large amount of copper cabling (for the power conductors), they are subject to theft. Theft of a trunk cable not only requires replacement of the trunk cable, but also shuts down operation of the cellular base station and may result in associated damage to equipment at the site.

The present invention has been described with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which certain embodiments of the invention are shown. This invention may, however, be embodied in many different forms and should not be construed as limited to the embodiments that are pictured and described herein; rather, these embodiments are provided so that this disclosure will be thorough and complete, and will fully convey the scope of the invention to those skilled in the art. Like numbers refer to like elements throughout the specification and drawings. It will also be

appreciated that the embodiments disclosed above can be combined in any way and/or combination to provide many additional embodiments.

It will be understood that, although the terms first, second, etc. are used herein to describe various elements, these elements should not be limited by these terms. These terms are only used to distinguish one element from another. For example, a first element could be termed a second element, and, similarly, a second element could be termed a first element, without departing from the scope of the present invention. As used herein, the term “and/or” includes any and all combinations of one or more of the associated listed items.

Unless otherwise defined, all technical and scientific terms that are used in this disclosure have the same meaning as commonly understood by one of ordinary skill in the art to which this invention belongs. The terminology used in the above description is for the purpose of describing particular embodiments only and is not intended to be limiting of the invention. As used in this disclosure, the singular forms “a”, “an” and “the” are intended to include the plural forms as well, unless the context clearly indicates otherwise. It will also be understood that when an element (e.g., a device, circuit, etc.) is referred to as being “connected” or “coupled” to another element, it can be directly connected or coupled to the other element or intervening elements may be present. In contrast, when an element is referred to as being “directly connected” or “directly coupled” to another element, there are no intervening elements present.

It will be further understood that the terms “comprises” “comprising,” “includes” and/or “including” when used herein, specify the presence of stated features, operations, elements, and/or components, but do not preclude the presence or addition of one or more other features, operations, elements, components, and/or groups thereof.

In the drawings and specification, there have been disclosed typical embodiments of the invention and, although specific terms are employed, they are used in a generic and descriptive sense only and not for purposes of limitation, the scope of the invention being set forth in the following claims.

That which is claimed is:

1. A method of operating a cellular radio that is remote from an associated baseband unit, the method comprising:
 - transmitting a first power supply signal from a power supply to a wireless power unit at least in part over a power cable;
 - wirelessly transmitting a second power supply signal from the wireless power unit to the cellular radio to power the cellular radio;
 - transmitting data from the associated baseband unit to a wireless transceiver at least in part over a data cable;
 - wirelessly transmitting the data from the wireless transceiver to the cellular radio; and
 - transmitting the data through an antenna that is coupled to the cellular radio.
2. The method of claim 1, wherein the wireless power unit is part of a trunk cable that includes the power cable and the data cable, and wherein the cellular radio is a remote radio head.
3. The method of claim 2, wherein the wireless power unit is part of a first cable termination that receives a first end of the trunk cable.
4. The method of claim 3, wherein the first cable termination includes a buck converter that reduces an average voltage of the first power supply signal.

5. The method of claim 4, further comprising a second cable termination that receives a second end of the trunk cable, the second cable termination including a boost converter that increases an average voltage of the first power supply signal.

6. The method of claim 5, wherein the trunk cable and the first and second cable terminations together form a sealed trunk cable assembly that cannot be opened in the field.

7. The method of claim 3, wherein the wireless transceiver comprises an 802.11 transceiver, and wherein the first cable termination is positioned adjacent the cellular radio near the top of a tower.

8. The method of claim 3, wherein the first cable termination includes a flexible extension, and wherein the wireless power unit is within the flexible extension.

9. The method of claim 3, wherein the wireless power unit comprises an electromagnetic induction unit, and wherein the first cable termination is positioned adjacent the cellular radio near the top of a tower.

10. The method of claim 3, wherein the data cable comprises a fiber optic data cable, and wherein the first cable termination includes an optical-to-electrical converter that converts an optical data signal into an electrical signal that is provided to the wireless transceiver.

11. The method of claim 1, further comprising wirelessly transmitting control signals to an antenna line device that is adjacent the cellular radio.

12. The method of claim 11, further comprising wirelessly providing a power supply signal to the antenna line device.

13. The method of claim 11, wherein the cellular radio and the antenna line device are located on a tower, wherein an antenna line device controller is located at the bottom of the tower and wirelessly transmit the control signals to the top of the tower, and wherein the antenna line device is powered at least in part by power from solar cells.

14. A trunk cable assembly for a cellular base station, comprising:

- a conductive power cable;
 - a wireless power unit coupled to the conductive power cable;
 - a fiber optic data cable;
 - an optical-to-electrical converter that is positioned to receive an optical signal output from the fiber optic data cable; and
 - a wireless transceiver that is coupled to an output of the optical-to-electrical converter,
- wherein the wireless power unit, the optical-to-electrical converter and the wireless transceiver are all within a first cable termination that receives a first end of the conductive power cable and a first end of the fiber optic data cable,
- wherein a common jacket encloses the conductive power cable and the fiber optic data cable to provide a hybrid fiber optic-power trunk cable, and wherein the first cable termination is a permanently sealed cable termination, and
- wherein the first cable termination includes a buck converter that is configured to reduce an average voltage of a power supply signal carried by the conductive power cable.

15. The trunk cable assembly of claim 14, further comprising a second cable termination that receives a second end of the hybrid fiber optic-power trunk cable, the second cable termination including a boost converter that increases an average voltage of the power supply signal.

16. The trunk cable assembly of claim 15, wherein the second cable termination includes:

- a second wireless power unit coupled to the conductive power cable;
- a second optical-to-electrical converter; and
- a second wireless transceiver that is coupled to an output of the second optical-to-electrical converter.

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17. A trunk cable assembly for a cellular base station, comprising:

- a conductive power cable;
- a wireless power unit coupled to the conductive power cable;
- a fiber optic data cable;
- an optical-to-electrical converter that is positioned to receive an optical signal output from the fiber optic data cable; and
- a wireless transceiver that is coupled to an output of the optical-to-electrical converter,

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wherein the wireless power unit, the optical-to-electrical converter and the wireless transceiver are all within a first cable termination that receives a first end of the conductive power cable and a first end of the fiber optic data cable, and

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wherein the first cable termination includes a flexible extension, and wherein the wireless power unit is within the flexible extension.

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